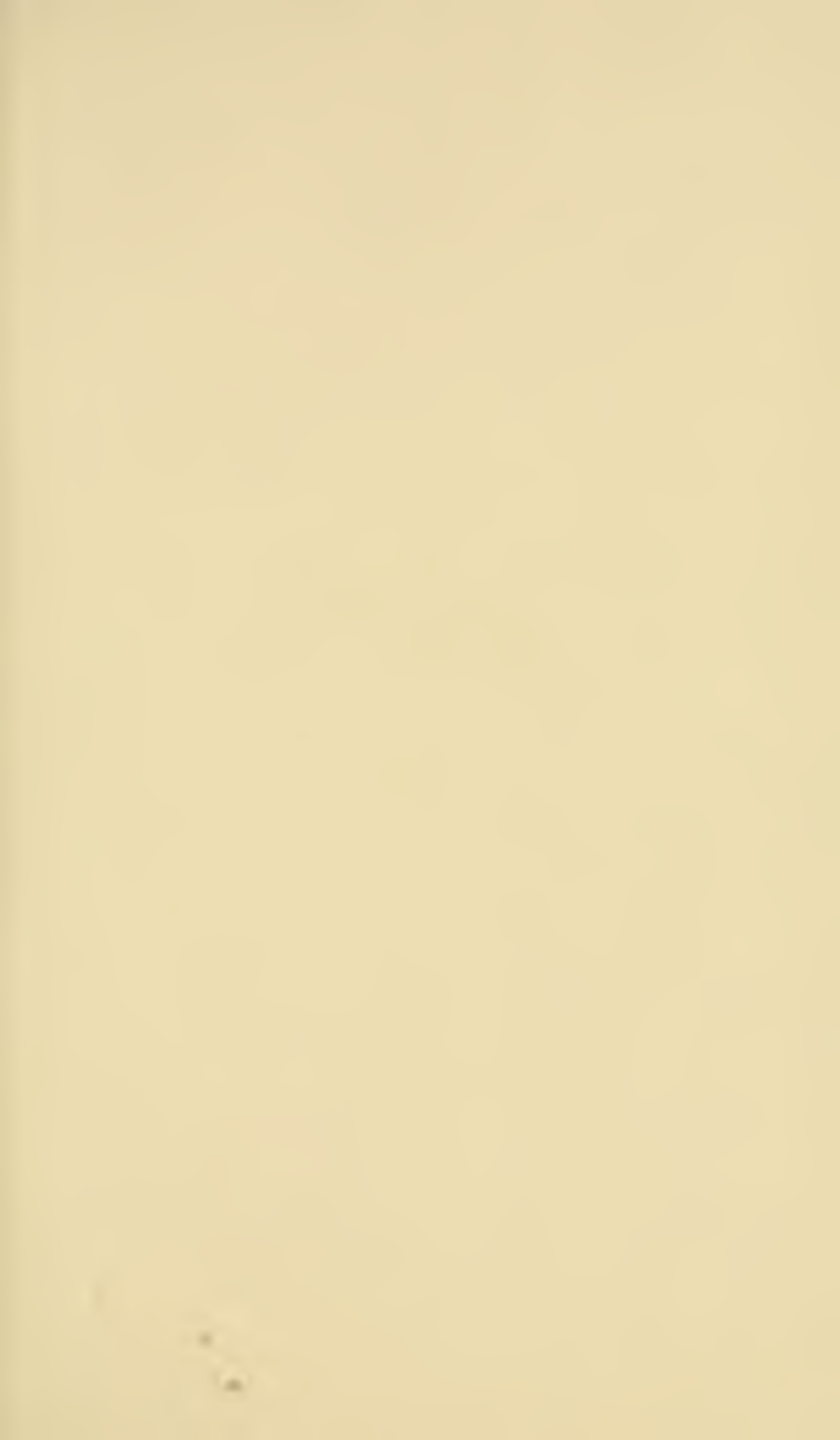


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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

— OF —

WILLIAM CANNON,

DELIVERED AT DOVER,

UPON TAKING THE OATH OF OFFICE AS

Governor of the State of Delaware,

JANUARY 20, 1863.



Delaware Governor William Cannon, 1863

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1863.

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

Senators and Representatives,

Fellow Citizens :

In assuming the office of the Chief Executive of the State, custom requires that I shall address you.

In ordinary times, the functions of the Governor being limited to the performance of the usual duties specifically imposed by the Constitution, the occasion of inauguration commonly affords a narrow compass for remarks, and is chiefly interesting, as presenting an illustration of the sovereignty of the people, effecting a change of rulers by the peaceful decision of the ballot-box instead of the forcible arbitrament of the sword.

Invested with no part of the Legislative power, the Executive has no direct agency in the enactment of the laws, and, even when giving information to the General Assembly and recommending measures expedient for the State, as enjoined by the Constitution, is generally confined to the recommendation of statutory changes in unimportant particulars, and very much of the actual legislation has been of merely local and individual interest.

Such being the situation of our municipal affairs, were it not for the disturbed condition of the nation, I might here conclude this inaugural, with the mere announcement that in the execution of my office, I

would faithfully and to the best of my ability discharge the simple duties devolved upon me by the Constitution and Laws of this State.

But it is manifest that the obligation to support the Constitution of the United States, creates other responsibilities and may impose on me the performance of other duties, than such as are ordinarily incident to the relation which I am about to assume.

In this crisis, it behooves every private citizen, much more every public functionary, to maintain an undeviating loyalty to the National Government, and I am unwilling to permit this first occasion to pass, without declaring my determination, to the extent of the powers with which I am invested, to support the Government of the United States.

The events of the past two years are unnecessary to be specially recounted. A gigantic rebellion threatens to destroy the nation. Incepted by fraud and consummated by oppression, it stands unparalleled in wickedness.

Revolutions have occurred on the part of those excluded from the conduct of public affairs or aggrieved by their administration, but this is the first instance of an attempt to overthrow a Government by those who were, at the same time, its lawful administrators and the chief recipients of its bounty.

It is true that their action is claimed to be based on the right of a State to secede from a compact between sovereignties. I know that the doctrine of secession is apparently disclaimed in this State, either as a right or as a remedy for existing evils, but I am also aware that the dogma of State-Rights, so called, is sedulously inculcated and pressed to an extent which, if true, though it may not wholly justify the revolting States, renders it difficult to find the ground of condemnation.

The public mind is, to a considerable degree, imbued with this theory, and though it finds its devel-

opement mainly in partizan strictures, has, more than anything else, tended to keep a large body of our citizens aloof from active co-operation with the Government, in the suppression of rebellion.

Many persons, well informed and well affected towards the Union, cannot understand why a State has not the right to determine her own political status, and though many, startled at the legitimate consequence of this dogma, have, upon a review, surrendered their former opinions; others equally honest, retain them, to their own embarrassment and the encouragement of those really in sympathy with the enemies of the United States.

This induces me briefly to consider the true relation between the State and National Governments, and this with the more freedom, that the last message of my predecessor, assuming the Constitution of the United States to be a mere compact between States, in my judgment, is calculated to confirm the political heresy that constitutes the very corner stone of the rebellion.

The Union is older than the Constitution. The thirteen colonies were governed by their own assemblies before the Revolution. They entered into the struggle, dependent colonies of Great Britain—they emerged, separate and independent States, as related to the mother-country, but tied together by a bond of Union as between themselves and their people.

This Union was cemented more closely by the Articles of Confederation, and, finally, to remedy the defects of that system and “to form a more perfect Union” the Constitution was adopted.

The capital weakness of the Confederacy consisted in the fact that Congress was, mainly, a merely commendatory body, possessing no power of enforcement except against the States in their sovereign character.

If, for example, Congress determined that a tax

should be levied, it indicated to the States respectively, the amount to be paid by each, but the raising of the sum was left to the State itself—if, engaged in war and troops were to be levied, the quota of each State was determined by Congress, but whether they were raised depended upon the action of the State, so that, in either case, if it neglected or refused, there was no remedy except a resort to force against the delinquent State.

By the adoption of the Constitution this defect was remedied. In the place of a Confederacy, a Government was created, limited in the sphere of its action and as to the subjects of its powers, but within that sphere and over those subjects, supreme.

It no longer operated on or through independent, political organizations, but directly on individuals. It possessed a separate and often exclusive sovereignty, with Legislative, Judicial and Executive power inherent in itself and, by means of its own departments, capable of declaring, interpreting and executing its own will. The creation of this Government, in nowise destroyed the States. They still retained their separate existence and their sovereignty except so far as it was diminished by the grant to the Government of the United States. The same people composed both. They recognized the necessity of a National Government, possessed of greater strength and capable of securing respect abroad and concord at home.

They, therefore, communicated to it the powers necessary to the general safety and tranquility.

This left in the State Governments the great residuum, proper for the management of their own domestic concerns. The title to land—the transmission of estates—the personal security of the citizen at home—the domestic relations—in fine, the numberless subjects of municipal regulation are all left to the control of the States.

This distribution necessarily involved correlative duties and obligations. The citizen became the subject of two Governments—owing allegiance to two separate sovereignties—he was, at the same time, a citizen of the United States and of the State of Delaware.

In case each kept within its appropriate sphere, no collision could ensue ; but, as each had its own legislative, judicial and executive administrators, it was foreseen that questions of jurisdiction would necessarily arise, and that the State and National Governments might differ.

Notwithstanding the attribute of sovereignty deducible from the possession of powers necessarily importing it, the Constitution specially ordained that “This Constitution and the laws of the United States, “which shall be made in pursuance thereof, * * * * “shall be the supreme law of the land and the judges “in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in “the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary “notwithstanding.”

This declaration, conferring not only sovereignty but supremacy, indicates that the relation which the National Government bears to the citizen is higher than that of the State. It announces that his primary allegiance is due to the Nation and, in case of conflict, his obligation is first to obey the Government and defend the Flag of the United States.

It is an obligation from which no State Legislature—State Convention or other State authority whatsoever can absolve him. The claim of the United States is paramount—its jurisdiction supreme—his allegiance is personal, his liability, individual—it issues its mandates to him as a subject, and executes its sentence against him as a man.

This furnishes the answer to the sophism that the suppression of rebellion is the coercion of a State. The force employed by the Government is not levelled

at States in their sovereign character but against the individuals engaged in forcible resistance to its authority. When the United States convicts and punishes a criminal, for robbing the mail or counterfeiting the currency, she does not inquire whether he is a citizen of Delaware or New Hampshire, but takes cognizance of him as a person amenable to her original jurisdiction. These pretended ordinances of secession, are legal nullities. Having the semblance of authority, they possess no other or higher validity, as against the United States, than would have been conferred by any voluntary assemblage of individuals. The only sanction they can claim is from the force of arms. If the rebellious government at Richmond can maintain its position, the insurgents will have accomplished a Revolution not only against the Government, but against the principles upon which it is founded. The contest, on their part, is against the right of the people to govern themselves. A resort to arms against the decision of the ballot-box. The title to their sovereignty will be found, not in any State enactment or Convention Ordinance, but in their successful resistance to the powers of the United States.

By this complex arrangement in the creation of two sovereignties, opposing forces were brought in operation. The problem was presented whether the centripetal or centrifugal force would predominate or whether, with powers duly adjusted, each Government would be kept moving in its proper orbit.

The nature of the State Governments—the immediate protection afforded by them to the citizens—his everyday interests secured by their legislation and decided by their judicial tribunals—the great fact that they were the direct source of personal aggrandizement—the election of Representatives practically by their people and of Senators of the United States, by their Legislatures, conspired to keep alive a sense

of their benefit, while the influence of the National Government, though far more efficacious in contributing to his security, was lost sight of by the citizen, because removed from the sphere of his immediate observation.

Like as the laws of attraction and gravitation, whose unseen operations keep the Universe together, are less regarded than the summer showers visible in the crops that fill the granaries of the husbandman.

Counteracting this tendency to disintegration was the rapid advance of facilities for travel and transportation and, notwithstanding the immense increase of territory and population, the extremities of the Union are less distant from the heart, in the great commercial depots of the country, than when we emerged from the Revolution.

Though retarded, the antagonizing quality of State Rights soon became manifest, and found its first practical development in the announcement of the right of a State to nullify an act of Congress whenever it appeared oppressive or unconstitutional. This political heresy, though falling far short of the monstrous pretence of the right of secession, was suppressed by the vigorous Proclamation of Andrew Jackson, and, though politically opposed to his Administration, the State of Delaware cordially endorsed the views of the President and announced her determination to support him in the rigid enforcement of the laws.

For the time, the malcontents were awed into submission, but ever since there has not been wanting an influential class of public men in the South, who have persistently addressed themselves to the disruption of the Union.

The fact that the departments of the Government were almost wholly filled by Southern incumbents, prevented concurrence among themselves, and the old Government was still dear to a very large body

of the people, to whom the establishment of the new Confederacy promised no especial advantage, but whose co-operation was necessary to the accomplishment of their purpose.

The gradual increase of population, under the law of the Almighty that a community based upon free labor will outstrip a society founded upon unpaid toil, transferred the political power from the South and her politicians were not slow to recognize that, in the future, they would be deprived of the engrossment of the administration of the Government and the emoluments of official patronage.

This,—the glory of the Constitution—the working out of the blessings it was designed to secure—the establishment of great States—the extension of free institutions—the development of the resources of the country—was made the occasion for the agreement of the one class in compassing the destruction of the Republic.

Unfortunately, an instrument was at hand sufficiently potent to array the other against the Government. This engine of mischief was African slavery. Without it the rebellion could never have been consummated.

By charging that the North was unfriendly to the continuance of a domestic institution, in which many were pecuniarily interested, the conspirators induced the belief that the triumph of the free States was the prelude to its destruction.

By representing that the political power had departed from the South, they exhibited her as in a state of political bondage and that, thenceforth, not only their national, but domestic policy, would be subject to the control of a northern majority. By stigmatizing the dominant party, by which they intended the northern people, as amalgamationists, they impressed the multitude with the conviction that the negro would be elevated to the social level

of the white man and invested with all the rights and privileges of the citizen.

Emissaries were sent to the loyal slave States to secure their co-operation and for the first time, in the legislative halls of the State of Delaware, was heard a plea for treason.

Equally proof against appeals to her prejudice as a slave State and to the suggestion of interest as the future manufacturer for the new Confederacy, she stood firm in her devotion to the Union, and her answer to the invitation of secession, is the presence of four Regiments of her patriotic sons, armed in defence of the Republic.

It will be perceived that these alleged causes of dissolution were purely speculative.

Even the Fugitive Slave Law, the fertile source of crimination, had, in the main, been faithfully executed. To prove this, the testimony of President Buchanan in his last message is ample.

That the sentiment of the Northern people is opposed to slavery is true, were it otherwise it would be the condemnation of their own free institutions. That, as private individuals, they would take no part in the capture of a fugitive, is also true. Even in the South a negro-catcher is held in low repute. The fact that, despite of this settled Northern sentiment, the fugitive slave law "was executed in every contested case," evinces a law-abiding character, which, it is submitted, the South would have done well to have imitated.

So of Personal Liberty Bills. For the most part, these were ancient statutes, passed long before the enactment which it was alleged they were designed to obstruct and had lain buried in the mass of obsolete and inoperative legislation. As practical measures they were mainly useless. Their significance rested in the fact that they were evidence of a jealous vigilance over the rights of freemen..

If they were justly liable to the charge of unconstitutionality, the Supreme Court of the United States was open and it could not be averred that the Judges were hostile to slavery.

The failure to subject them to this test argues either that the conspirators had no confidence in their illegality or that they preferred them to remain, as materials of agitation, to accomplish a purpose far different from the faithful execution of the Fugitive Slave Law.

But it is also remarkable that the States most obnoxious to censure for their enactment and those most violent in their denunciations, were States, into which a fugitive rarely entered and from which one, almost as rarely escaped. Out of a slave population of 1798, loyal Delaware, in the decade between 1850 and 1860, lost twelve, one to one hundred and fifty, while South Carolina, with an aggregate of 384,984, in the same period lost but twenty-three, one to seventeen thousand five hundred and one.

So the arraignment of the Northern Press. That it contained articles too often intemperate in the condemnation of slavery and calculated to irritate the Southern people is admitted, but it is equally true that their own organs were none the less blameful. They abounded in disquisitions laudatory of their peculiar institutions, vituperative of Northern customs and stigmatic of Northern labor.

All this was the necessary result of that liberty of speech inseparable from free government.

With this however, the Government of the United States had nothing to do. By no act of omission or commission had it interfered with the rights of the South. The citadel of slavery was never so strongly fortified as at the commencement of the rebellion.

The root of the evil was not the fear of abolition. The dissolution of the Union removed one of the safeguards of slavery.

If, in the progress of events, the nations of the earth shall, in the development of the aptitude of other soils, free themselves from dependence on the great staple of the South, and if, in working out the salvation of the Republic, slavery shall be crushed between the upper and the nether mill stone, it will be the fault of those who have employed them as instrumentalities of treason.

In the crisis thus forced upon the country, the administration had no option but to resist the destruction of the Government. Casuists may dispute; moralists may condemn, but this war, on the part of the nation, was the necessary resistance against death.

Terrible as war may be, there is something still more afflicting. The spectacle of a mighty people supinely yielding to the first symptom of disease and lapsing without a struggle into dissolution. The natural body yields only when it has become so enfeebled or corrupted as to be incapable of effort, and the Government that perishes without resistance is not worth preserving.

As the war was unavoidable, so it was necessary that it should be conducted on a scale commensurate with the magnitude of the interests involved in the issue. The National life was at stake, the National resources were the pledge of its safety.

The expenditures have been met, hitherto, by the voluntary contributions of the people and so skilfully have the finances been managed and so unimpaired is the public confidence, that it is easier to obtain money on the faith of Government securities now, than at the commencement of the rebellion. Nor is this wonderful. All that we are or hope to be is involved in the Union. Founded to insure domestic tranquility and provide for the common defence, it is as necessary now, as when its foundation stones were laid by the wisdom and cemented by the blood of our

fathers. Leagues of amity are idle theories. Grievances, that would be borne or redressed within the Union, would be intolerable without it. With Governments, as with families, proximity begets controversy. The most frequent and desolating wars are between neighboring nations. The farther removed from one another, the greater the probability of friendship. Of all foreign powers Russia is the most distant and our most constant ally. The Union is our only safeguard. There is no interest to which it is not essential—no section to which it is not indispensable. Even slavery, the miserable apology for its destruction, finds its only refuge in the compromises of the constitution.

In this struggle for national existence, it is peculiarly gratifying to refer to the Union sentiment of the State of Delaware. Comparatively feeble in her resources, embarrassed by her border location and thwarted by the presence of an existing sympathy with the people of the revolting States, that hindered the progress of enlistment, the State of Delaware, exhibits a proportion of troops alike creditable to herself and useful to the Republic. The fields of Antietam and Fredericksburg attest their constancy and their courage.

Many have been struck down in the battle—many have perished by the ordinary casualties of the camp and the march.

Those who have fallen, should be hallowed in memory as brave men and true patriots, who died for their country.

Those who live, demand our active sympathy. The State owes to them a debt of gratitude which, as yet, she has taken no steps to discharge. It becomes us, who enjoy the comforts of home by their sacrifices and to whom security is guarantied by their perils, to take care that suitable provision be made for the welfare of themselves and their families, and while pri-

vate citizens are contributing from their bounty, I recommend that the General Assembly shall appropriate such sum as may comport with the honor of the State, and adopt suitable measures for its distribution. Especially do I commend to your consideration the sick and wounded, scattered in the various hospitals provided by the Government. In this emergency, it is impossible that all can be tenderly cared for by the nation. Our own regiments are the members of our own families—the children of the State. I earnestly advise that an agent be appointed in its behalf, to look after their welfare and that sufficient funds be placed at his disposal to ensure their comfort.

Two matters present themselves, to which I would not advert, had they not been made subjects of public comment.

The presence of troops at various voting places on the day of the general election has been deemed worthy of animadversion.

Apprehensions of violence, apparently well-grounded, induced citizens of this State to desire a military force to preserve the public peace and suppress any manifestation of riot.

They were accompanied by an officer of high grade and, in their distribution, were placed under the immediate control of citizens of prudence and discretion. They were designed, and used, as a police force for the protection of peaceable citizens, without regard to their political opinions. In no case did they interfere with the exercise of the right of suffrage by any voter and, in all respects, their presence was salutary in securing good order and preventing probable collision among our own people.

The measure, in my judgment, was eminently prudent, and as it is my purpose to support the Government to the extremity of my power, I shall have no hesitancy, should an emergency occur, which, how-

ever, I do not apprehend, in asking its assistance for the prevention or suppression of domestic violence.

It has also been urged, with considerable acrimony, that citizens of the State of Delaware have been arrested by the General Government or by persons pretending to act under its authority.

How much of this apparent zeal for personal liberty is attributable to a sincere desire to vindicate the rights of the citizen and how much to political opposition to the administration, cannot of course be accurately discerned.

It is not alleged that undue violence was used towards any one, or that he was subjected to any indignity other than a brief imprisonment. That such arrests should have been deemed necessary, is certainly to be regretted.

The liberty of the citizen cannot be too highly regarded or too sedulously protected. But it should be borne in mind that the safety of the Government is of more worth than the liberty or even the life of any citizen and that those entrusted with its preservation are bound to see, that, by no want of vigilance on their part, the Republic shall suffer any detriment. Nor should it be forgotten that, by a little timely precaution, an eruption may be prevented, which, suffered to break out, can be suppressed only by the lives of many citizens.

That irregularities will occur in periods of disquiet and especially when the Government, embarrassed with complications, is compelled to trust to the fidelity and intelligence of numberless agents, is unavoidable, and I submit that it is the part of a loyal citizen to bear, with patience, some inconvenience or even deprivation.

If innocent, he might attribute his suffering to misapprehension or even private malice, rather than to the intentional oppression of his Government.

But that there has existed, in this State, from the

beginning, an element of disloyalty, is unquestionable. That it has been manifested openly, mainly in the expressions of men of slight consideration is true, but that this development was the index of an underlying sentiment in those of higher social position is also true.

Could the recesses of the heart be laid open and the secret actions and sympathies of men be exposed, it would, I apprehend, be made manifest, that, in so far at least as the State of Delaware is concerned, the Government has been characterized, not by undue severity, but exceeding leniency, and that no man has been molested, who was not actually disloyal or against whom there did not exist reasonable ground of suspicion.

Had a strict inquisition been established, it might have been discovered that those who have been arrested were not the only ones obnoxious to censure, and had mere justice been meted out, some who have continued at large, denouncing the Government, might have been properly dealt with, not only as sympathizers, but actual partakers in treason.

It is my duty, also, to express my view in relation to the interest of the State of Delaware.

Connected with the Southern States by identity of domestic institutions and, therefore, in some degree, attracted towards them by educational bias, we are nevertheless indissolubly tied to the free States by the stronger cords of geographical position and commercial necessity.

Essentially an agricultural people, we find in the North the market for all we sell and the mart from which we are supplied with all we buy.

The increase of population by immigration, is almost wholly derived from that quarter and, in the sale of our real estate, for anything more than the mere neighborhood price, we look for purchasers wholly from that direction. Advertisements are

never inserted in Southern newspapers to attract bidders and for whatever improvement has been effected in the cultivation of the soil, we are indebted mainly to northern enterprise.

To the State of Delaware, a Southern Confederacy, if established, must be a foreign nation. We cannot unite with it and, in preparing for whatever contingency the future may present of Union or separation, it becomes our duty as well as our interest, to assimilate as rapidly as possible with those, with whom, from necessity, if not from choice, we are compelled to associate.

The only difference between us and the State of Pennsylvania, with which our relations of trade and intercourse are closest, is the existence of African slavery, and to it alone is to be ascribed whatever of doubt was created as to the loyalty of our people, and whatever of sympathy really existed among us in favor of rebellion.

Originally forming a portion of the same provincial government, from our failure to imitate her laudable example of emancipation, we have lagged in the march of material improvement; but not even the difference of domestic institutions can thwart the operation of the laws of trade and Philadelphia is as much the Metropolitan city of Delaware, as of the neighboring counties of Pennsylvania.

With these facts unalterably established, it must be that slavery in this State is doomed. We have no material interest to the prosperity of which it contributes. The gradual assimilation constantly going on, must work out its extinction. The period may be longer or shorter, but the result is inevitable, despite the struggles of those who would perpetuate it, as a social institution or a political machine.

I know that, in a State in which slavery has been long established, with the habits and prejudices of the people moulded by it, emancipation is a slow pro-

cess, and it will continue to exist long after it has ceased to be profitable. In the settlement of a new country, where the people approach the formation of their organic law, free from the trammels of existing institutions, it is different and I do not hesitate in the opinion that if the question were now concerning the introduction of slavery into this State, the sentiment of the people would be largely against it.

If this be true, there ought to be no valid reason why we should hesitate to do away with this existing evil, more than to bar the door against its introduction. Unfortunately, mere politicians are habitually timid and, looking at the result of the next election, they resist the agitation of any new question, no matter how important to the interests of the people, which can, by possibility, run counter to the prejudices of those who hold the balance of power and, by insisting upon the acquiescence of the majority, subordinate the welfare of the State to the success of a political organization, which, in the end, redounds to the benefit of a few individuals, leaving the mass of the community to suffer for their advantage.

I submit whether this is not the only cause why the State of Delaware has not heretofore freed herself from slavery, long felt as an incubus upon her prosperity.

Now that there is a disposition to disregard the ties of former political associations, and men are searching for the true principles of government, it seems to me peculiarly meet to call the attention of the people to this subject, and relying upon their intelligence to appreciate and finally to approve the suggestion, earnestly to recommend the adoption of such measures as will relieve them of a burthen that hinders their social and material advancement.

Nor should there be any delicacy in the consideration of this question. It is a matter of merely municipal regulation. The status of the negro, whether

bond or free, rests in the determination of the laws of the State of Delaware. That he is the subject of property here, is the result of our own local usage, liable to be altered, as any other common law custom, by the enactment of our own Legislature. No other authority has any jurisdiction over the matter. Others may suggest reasons—may offer inducements—but whether it shall be done, and the time and mode of doing it, are for our own people to decide, in view of all circumstances of benefit or injury.

In the consideration of the subject, two questions are presented: The interest of the State—the rights of the master.

If the State has any interest in favor of slavery, it can only be because that species of population is valuable as an element of labor. This is to be determined by their number and the character of the labor they perform.

The whole population of the State, as shewn by the last census, is 112,216. Of this number 90,589 are whites and 21,627 negroes. Of the latter, 19,589 are free and 1798 slaves, so that there is a total free population of 110,418 and 1798 slave. The latter are distributed among the several counties in the following numbers: New Castle, 254; Kent, 203; Sussex, 1341; while the aggregate free population of New Castle is 54,543; Kent, 27,601; Sussex, 28,274; being in New Castle, 1 slave to 175 free; Kent, 1 slave to 131 free, and Sussex, 1 slave to 21 free; and in the aggregate, 1 slave to 61 free persons in the State.

This calculation is based upon the census enumeration, in which the slaves are counted as for life, whereas in fact a large portion are manumitted, to whom, under the laws of this State, the right to freedom, according to the act of manumission, attaches, and who ought, therefore, for the purpose of this discussion, to be considered, free—the question now

being, whether the State shall be declared free by an emancipation policy, present or prospective—immediate or gradual. There are no means of ascertaining with certainty how many are held as manumitted servants, but I do not think that one-third would be an over estimate, and the above figures should be correspondingly reduced.

By our statute, the children of manumitted slaves, born after the act of manumission, are not slaves for life, but for a limited period only, and, therefore, the aggregate is subject to another abatement.

Of the residue, a considerable number are children and decrepit persons, unable to work, and, in an inquiry as to their productive value, are also to be deducted.

It appears, then, that a very small proportion of the labor of the State is dependent upon the slave population.

The kind of labor they perform is merely agricultural and domestic and whatever may be the question as to the necessity of slave labor in the cotton States, no one will pretend that, in this State, there is any species of work that cannot be as well performed by a freeman as a slave—by a white man as a negro.

If it can be, the sole question remains, will it be done as well. This is solved by determining whether paid or unpaid labor is best performed—whether wages are any incentive to the laborer—whether a man will work as well without pay as for it—and this, irrespective of whether the laborer be white or black.

I am not reduced to run a parallel between a free negro and a slave, but if I were, the general rule would be amply vindicated.

But every slave does the work that a white man can perform, and if he were not a slave, the white man would have the chance to compete for the performance of the labor and for the receipt of the money that it requires to keep the slave. Being superior to the

negro, he would be preferred, but the master being compelled to maintain his slave, is forced to employ him, notwithstanding his labor is inferior. The white man is defrauded, because the slave performs the labor which he ought to do and receives the pay, in his subsistence, that ought to go towards the comfortable support of him and his family.

Such is the necessary quality of slavery, and where it most abounds, the lot of the laboring white man is the most miserable.

The white race constitutes the State, and it is to secure their interest that legislation should be primarily directed. It is not necessary to oppress any other race, but surely it is not proper, specially to protect a class of laborers, that, to the extent to which they obtain, effectually prevent the white man from procuring work.

Legislation should also be directed to secure that system which offers the greatest inducements to immigration and which, by comparative analysis, has been found to open up the resources of the State.

What caused the immense wealth, increase and material developement of the free States? In what, except slavery, did New York differ from Virginia, in which the advantage was not on the side of the latter? Inferior in soil, in climate, in water power, in minerals, in harbors, in all the natural advantages that make up the raw material for improvement, why has the one State advanced, while the other has retrograded, in relative developement?

What prevents more rapid immigration into this State, and the consequent increase, not only of population, but of general improvement attendant upon it? Nothing but the fact, that in institution—in education—in name, it is a slave State. There is a shrinking on the part of men, reared under free institutions, from contact with slavery. They are unwilling to bring up their children under its influence. I do not argue

whether this sentiment be right or wrong. I speak of it as a fact, established and admitted, preventing men coming from free States to settle among us. If it be desirable that they should come, to invest their capital—to bring with them habits of industry and frugality—to enrich the State, not only by their labor and example, but by stimulating additional immigration, ensuring diversified employment and creating additional demand for the products of the soil and therefore enhanced prices for the land, it would seem to be desirable to do away with the impediment that hinders this consummation, and if the hindrance be found in the existence of slavery, to put it in the course of definite extinction.

An objection is made to this policy, that it will turn loose upon society a large class of persons unfitted for the enjoyment of freedom.

This objection, it will be perceived, applies only to immediate emancipation, and in relation to that, is, to my mind, more specious than solid.

We have, now, about 20,000 free negroes in this State. As an element of society they are not desirable, but I submit, that their sudden removal from the labor of the State would be highly inconvenient. Their gradual displacement and colonization, effecting a separation of the races and supplying their place with white labor, would be beneficial to both. This 20,000 free negro element, is to the slave, as 11 to 1, and the emancipated slave population would quietly sink into and be absorbed by the great mass of free negroes and no man would recognize that another free negro had been added to the State. In fact, now, in all but name, the State is free. The difficulty is to make white men in other States understand our condition. There is no distinguishing badge by which a slave can be discerned from a free negro. He has all his actual privileges and immunities and, practically, no one can tell whether a negro is bond or free. The question

would be different if all the negroes in the State were slaves and the proposition were the conferring of freedom upon one-fifth of our entire population, involving the instant destruction of an extensive domestic institution and an immediate and radical change of relation between the races. No such question is presented in this State. The large mass of the negro population are already free. There is no possibility of their return to bondage. The justice—the humanity of our people forbid it, and no sensible addition would be made by the immediate, not to say gradual, emancipation of the slaves.

Another objection has been urged, that emancipation, by inducing emigration from slave States, would produce a large accession to our free negro population.

However plausible this apprehension in theory, its fallacy is apparent by the test of experience.

I have collated the statistics of the relative increase of the whites and free negroes of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

A careful survey of the table appended, will show that Pennsylvania has increased most rapidly, in white, and Maryland in free negro population.

The result is attained, despite the fact, that the Southern boundary of Pennsylvania, through its entire extent, forms the division line between freedom and slavery and the common belief that New Jersey is the receptacle for a large proportion of the runaway slaves of Delaware and Maryland.

The further gratifying result is shewn, that the relative increase of the white population is rapidly and steadily augmenting.

The negro is not a migratory being. He will, sometimes, run from bondage. Like other men, he has aspirations for freedom. With no inducement to emigrate, the free negro rarely leaves the place where he was reared. His love of locality is proverbial. Where

he was born, he dies. Those who leave their native vicinity, for the most part, congregate in neighboring cities. Philadelphia contains nearly half the free negroes of Pennsylvania.

I pass by, as unworthy of notice, the suggestion of the probable establishment of the social and political equality of the races as a consequence of freedom. Such suggestion may be tolerable in a political canvass, in which the aspirant for popular favor plays upon the prejudice of the citizen to influence his vote, but it is unworthy of observation in a serious inquiry after truth.

The negro is, and so long as he is among us, ought to remain, an inferior being, under tutelage, and as the whole matter of his status depends on the will of the white man, those who ascribe the design to elevate him to an equality, do but cast discredit upon their own understanding and insult upon the people of the State. He cannot be equal until the majority so decide, and when they shall have arrived at the point at which equality would be tolerated, the emancipation of 1800 slaves when there are already 20,000 free negroes could make it none the more or less probable.

Were the discussion of such question admissible, upon an occasion like the present, I conceive that it would not be difficult to shew, that the evil to be apprehended, is not from the prevalence of the doctrine of emancipation and separation, but that, if it ever shall come, it will be the result of the teaching and practice of those, who, in defiance of the ordination of Providence in the dispersion of mankind, will continue distinct races in juxtaposition and communication with one another, until the choice between extermination and absorption shall be the only alternative.

I pass now to the consideration of the rights of the master. Under the usage of this State, confirmed by positive enactments, he has to his slave, a right, not

absolute, but qualified only, and therefore, even more than in things by nature the subject of dominion, he holds his right subordinate to the requirements of the public good.

That this right is conditional, is sufficiently attested by the statutory provisions regulating the relation. The master is prohibited from dealing with him as an absolute article of merchandise. He cannot alien him beyond the jurisdiction of the State, which, regarding him as a man, extends over him the protection of the law, and by prohibitory enactments, regulating his sale, restricts his value to the limit of the home-market, thus studiously preventing the State from being subjected to the policy of slave propagation for exportation and removing the inducement to an indefinite extension of the system.

This restriction on alienation—the judicial denial of the right of the free negro to hold his fellow in bondage—the criminal responsibility of the slave—all shew that under our laws he is regarded as something different from a mere chattel and that the nature of the right is modified by the attribute of humanity.

In the pure sense of the term, he is not property. His condition is the legal determination of the status of a person, and in this sense, emancipation is no destruction of a right of property, but the abrogation of a municipal custom, upon the sanction of which alone, the right of the master depended.

But still there is a right, in the nature of a right of property, and, to the extent to which it is recognised by our laws, is as sacred and inviolable as his right to any article absolutely proprietary. He cannot be deprived of it without compensation.

I need not argue concerning the value of the labor to the owner. The considerations already presented in reference to the interest of the State are applicable to that of the master.

I only offer to each slaveholder for solution, the

question, whether, economically considered, it is not cheaper to hire labor than to support his family of slaves, subject to the risk of sickness and other casualties and liabilities incident to ownership.

Most of the slave owners in this State are land-owners also, and if it be true that the abrogation of the institution will increase the material prosperity of the State, I submit to him, whether the value of his land may not be augmented to an extent much greater than the price of his slaves.

I will not dwell upon the interest of the master as affected by the fugitive nature of the property. Against destruction by fire, insurance offices provide—against the straying of cattle, good fences are a sufficient security, but there is no insurance or safeguard against the loss of a slave determined to assert his right to freedom.

There are but two modes by which the extinction of slavery can be accomplished. By direct emancipation or by the enactment of a law operative on after born issue, leaving the present property of the master unaffected.

The former would of course, be upon compensation—the latter depriving him of no right, no compensation would be proper.

Compensation, if rendered, must probably come from the National Government. There is no likelihood that the State will tender it, though, I believe, that if she were to pay the home valuation for every slave within her limits, the sum expended would be more than re-imbursed by the increased value of the land.

The State contains an area of somewhat more than 2,000 square miles and 1,300,000 acres. Of these, according to the last census, 637,065 are improved, so that an advance of one dollar per acre on the improved land alone, would more than pay the value of all the slaves, manumitted and for life, young

and old, able bodied and decrepit, at 300 dollars per head.

The Government, in this rebellion, founded upon and made effective by slavery, finds emancipation an object worthy of its attention, especially in the Border States, where there exists an element of discontentment and sympathy with secession, kept alive by this institution. The Administration can do no act towards its suppression, but it must look carefully, lest, by possibility, slavery may be damaged by it. The horse of the rebel may be seized—his house may be occupied—his life, even, may be taken, and it excites comparatively little commiseration, but let a slave runaway from his owner and seek refuge within the Union lines and a howl of indignation is raised over the refusal to surrender him to his disloyal master, that he may be employed in digging entrenchments or raising bread-stuffs for the support of the rebellion.

This state of feeling tends to the encouragement of the enemies of the United States—to the embarrassment of the Government and to the prolongation of the contest.

In this view the President considers it cheaper, safer and more expeditious, to buy out the interest of the master and compensate the State for the inconvenience felt by the change of relation, thus breaking the back-bone of rebellion in the Border and bringing a quasi neutral territory into active support of the Government.

Should Congress concur in the recommendation of the Executive, and express a willingness to tender to this State fair remuneration, I do not hesitate, as a beneficial measure, to advise its acceptance; but as the measure of my own choice, I would prefer the enactment of a law, prospective in its operation, declaring the freedom of the future issue of slaves.

It will be observed that the foregoing remarks are confined to the condition of peaceful enfranchisement.

They do not apply to changes incident to a revolutionary crisis, and especially not to a rebellion in which slavery has been thrust forward as the chief instrument of its accomplishment.

He who calculates that a Nation can be involved in a struggle like this, and that no practical results will follow victory or defeat, has read history to little purpose. It would be as reasonable to expect a hurricane to pass through the forest, without leaving the ground strewn with dead branches and sapless trunks, as that this tempest of civil war should sweep over the land and leave no memorial of its progress.

The longer the contest is protracted, the more radical will be the change wrought.

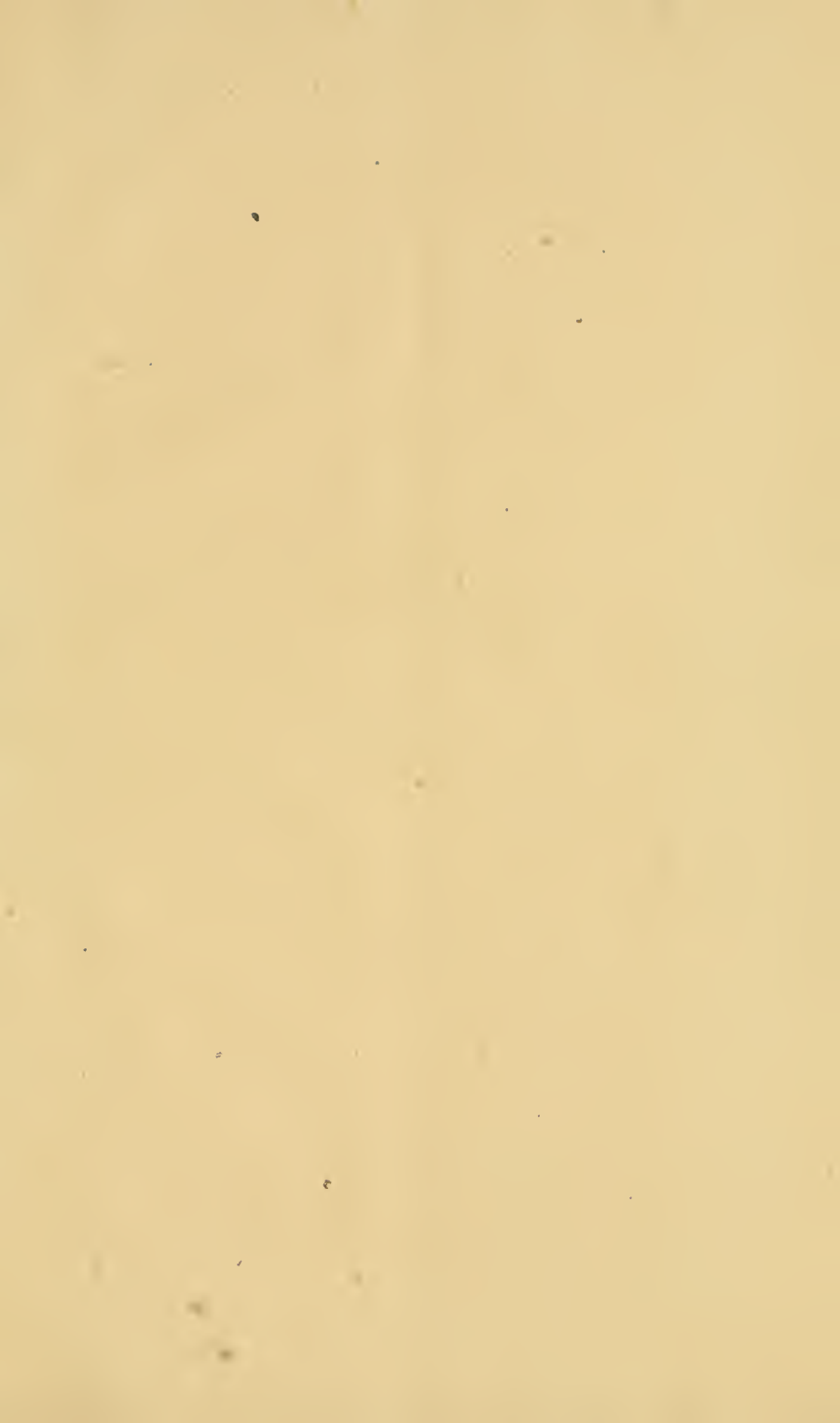
That it may be shortened, should be the ardent supplication of every Christian, that it may end in the establishment of the integrity of the Union, the fervent prayer of every Patriot. I invoke the God of our fathers, that God of concord, who presided over their deliberations, when they laid the foundation of the Republic, to incline the hearts of our Southern brethren to peace and submission to the legally constituted rulers of the nation, but failing this, I pray that same God, who is also the God of battles, that he may grant victory upon victory to the Union arms, until every vestige of rebellion is swept from the land and the Flag of the United States—the symbol of her sovereignty—shall again wave, in undisputed supremacy, over a free, united and prosperous people.

RATIO OF INCREASE OF WHITES AND FREE NEGROES FROM 1790 to 1860.

DELAWARE.			PENNSYLVANIA.		
	<i>White.</i>	<i>Free N.</i>		<i>White.</i>	<i>Free N.</i>
1790 to 1800	7.64	112.05	1790 to 1800	38.19	122.74
1800 to 1810	11.05	58.87	1800 to 1810	34.24	54.46
1810 to 1820	0 14 loss	1 35 loss	1810 to 1820	29.26	34.27
1820 to 1830	4.19	22.35	1820 to 1830	28.78	25.58
1830 to 1840	1.66	6.71	1830 to 1840	27.95	26.16
1840 to 1850	21.52	6.82	1840 to 1850	34.72	12.06
1850 to 1860	27.28	9.72	1850 to 1860	26.18	6.01
MARYLAND.			NEW JERSEY.		
	<i>White.</i>	<i>Free N.</i>		<i>White.</i>	<i>Free N.</i>
1790 to 1800	3.67	143 52	1790 to 1800	77.	122
1800 to 1810	8.68	73.21	1800 to 1810	16.26	78 16
1810 to 1820	10.67	17.01	1810 to 1820	13.46	58.86
1820 to 1830	11.86	33.24	1820 to 1830	16.64	46.89
1830 to 1840	9.03	17.26	1830 to 1840	17.09	14 97
1840 to 1850	31.34	20.36	1840 to 1850	32.04	13.14
1850 to 1860	23.14	12.35	1850 to 1860	38.92	6.33

TOTAL POPULATION WHITE AND FREE NEGRO.

DELAWARE.		<i>White.</i>	<i>Free N.</i>
1790		46.310	3.899
1860		90.589	19.942
MARYLAND.		<i>White.</i>	<i>Free N.</i>
1790		208 649	8.043
1860		515.915	88.942
PENNSYLVANIA.		<i>White.</i>	<i>Free N.</i>
1790		424.099	6.537
1860		2,849.266	56.849
NEW JERSEY.		<i>White.</i>	<i>Free N.</i>
1790		169.954	2 762
1860		646.699	25.318





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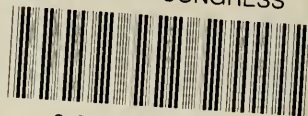


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